Sirhan Believes He Will Be Traded

Associated Press

Poster distributed in Arab countries by the Palestine Liberation Organization last year says, "Sirhan B. Sirhan—a guerrilla, not a murderer." Writing at bottom criticizes "Zionist circles" in the U.S. for allegedly trying to distort motives behind shooting of Senator Robert F. Kennedy.

Sirhan Bishara Sirhan — whose release was mentioned in some accounts yesterday as an Arab commando demand in return for the freedom of some 150 hijacked passengers—has said in interviews that he expected to be freed at some time in similar fashion.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which held the hostages, officially denied, however, making such a demand.

The slim, dark-haired Jordanian immigrant, convicted last year of the murder of Senator Robert F. Kennedy, is in a small cell on death row in California's San Quentin Prison. He is appealing his death sentence.

During his four-month trial last year, Sirhan repeatedly told of his intense hatred of Senator Kennedy for his espousal of the Israeli cause and for his pledges to send additional United States war planes to Israel.

Although the trial never became a sounding board for the pros and cons of the Israeli-Arab conflict, there was testimony about Sirhan's unhappy boyhood in Jerusalem's Palestinian Arab quarter where he witnessed a number of bloody clashes.

"I did it for my country," a witness quoted Sirhan as saying shortly after the shooting of Senator Kennedy at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles.

Reached by telephone yesterday at her home in Pasadena, Calif., Mrs. Mary Sirhan, the mother of the convicted murderer, in a voice that sounded as if she was both laughing and crying, said "I can't believe it" when told of the reported bid for her son's freedom.